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МУЛЬТИКУЛЬТУРАЛИЗМ ГОРОДА БИШКЕК: ЭТНИЧНОСТЬ И ЯЗЫК В СОВЕТСКИЙ И ПОСТСОВЕТСКИЙ ПЕРИОДЫ

Статья изучает изменения в этнической композиции города Бишкек в досоветский, советский и постсоветский периоды, а также факторы, которые внесли свой вклад в формирование и развитие полиэтничного общества в городе. Другой целью статьи является анализ языковой ситуации в Бишкеке, изменения в языковой политике до и после получения независимости.

Различные факторы способствовали созданию полиэтничного общества в городе Бишкек. Колонизация, индустриализация, коллективизация, культурная революция, этнические депортации существенно изменили этническую ситуацию в городе в досоветский и советский периоды. Однако главными факторами этнических изменений после получения независимости стали эмиграция русских, украинцев, татар, немцев и других некоренных этнических групп и внутренняя миграция кыргызов из регионов и сельской местности в столицу. Язык — не только средство коммуникации, но и важный маркер этнической идентичности. В советское время русский язык был официальным языком Советского Союза и господствующим языком в Бишкеке. Он был языком межэтнической и внутриэтнической коммуникации в городе, однако после получения независимости языковая ситуация изменилась. Русский язык сохранил свои позиции в качестве языка высшего образования, науки и межэтнического общения.

Ключевые слова: мультикультурализм, этничность, этническая группа, этническое большинство, советский период, постсоветский период, перепись населения, социологическое исследование, этническая миграция.

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MULTICULTURALISM OF BISHKEK CITY: ETHNICITY AND LANGUAGE IN SOVIET AND POST-SOVIET TIMES

The paper studies the changes in the ethnic composition of Bishkek city in the pre-Soviet period, Soviet and the post-Soviet periods, and the factors that contributed to the creation and development of multiethnic society in Bishkek city. The other focus of the paper will be the analysis of the language situation in Bishkek, the shifts in the language policy of the city before and after independence.

Various factors contributed to the development of a multiethnic society in Bishkek city. Colonization, Industrialization, Collectivization, Cultural Revolution, ethnic deportations dramatically changed the ethnic situation in the city during the pre-Soviet and Soviet times. However, the main factors of ethnic changes after independence were the emigration of Russians, Ukrainians, Tatars, Germans and other non-indigenous ethnic groups and the internal migration of Kyrgyz from regions and rural areas to Bishkek city.

Language is not only the means of communication but an important marker of ethnic identity. During the Soviet time, Russian was the official language in the Soviet Union as well as the dominant language in Bishkek city. It was the language of interethnic and intra-ethnic communication in the city. However, after independence Russian still retains its position as the language of higher education, science and interethnic communication.

Key words: multiculturalism, ethnicity, ethnic group, ethnic majority, Soviet period, post-Soviet period, census, survey, ethnic migration.

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Introduction

Bishkek is the capital and the largest city of Kyrgyzstan. Built by the Russian Empire in 1878, Bishkek witnessed dramatic ethno-demographic changes that took place during the Soviet and post-Soviet periods. Originally established as the city for Russian administration, Bishkek turned to be truly multiethnic with more than 80 ethnic groups living there today.

According to the official data of the National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic, by January 1, 2017, one million people resided in Bishkek city that consisted one sixth of the total population of six million people in the Kyrgyz Republic [Natsional'nyi statisticheskii komitet Kyrgyzskoi Respubliki].

According to the official statistics of 2016, the ethnic groups of Bishkek city were represented by 72% of Kyrgyz, 18% of Russians, 1.6% of Uighurs, 1.3% of Uzbeks, 1.3% of Koreans, 1.2% of

Tatars, 1% of Kazakhs, 0.6% of Ukrainians, 0.5% of Dungans and 2.5% of other ethnic groups [Natsional'nyi statisticheskii komitet Kyrgyzskoi Respubliki].

This paper will study the changes in the ethnic composition of Bishkek city in the pre-Soviet period, Soviet and the post-Soviet periods, and the factors that contributed to the creation and development of multiethnic society in Bishkek city at those time periods. The other focus of the paper will be the analysis of the language issue in Bishkek, the shifts in the language policy and language situation of the city before and after independence and the role of two languages widely spoken in Bishkek at present such as Russian and Kyrgyz based on the 2003 and 2011 surveys. It will also be argued in the paper that both, language and ethnicity are closely related, since language can serve not only as the means of communication but also a marker of ethnic identity.

Historical background

In 2017, Bishkek officially celebrated its 139th anniversary. However, historians believe that the city is much older compared to its official age. The archeological findings suggest distinguishing four historical periods in the development of Bishkek city: the first Turkic period that lasted from the 7th to 13th centuries, the second Russian period from 1825 to 1926, the third Soviet period from 1924 to 1991, and the last post-Soviet period from 1991 till present.

Bishkek was established as a settlement in the 7–8th centuries during the Turkic period. Although the settlement began to develop at the time of Turkic Kaganate, those who mainly lived there were not Turks but Sogdians, the people who settled there before Turks came and subordinated them. While Sogdians were sedentary people engaged in the trade along the Great Silk Road and lived in cities, Turks led a nomadic lifestyle and occupied predominantly rural areas. The main route of the Great Silk Road was going through the Chui Valley and can be associated presently with *Jibek Jolu* Avenue, one of the oldest streets in Bishkek city. In the 13th century, the settlement was completely destroyed by Genghis Khan's army, so that the prosperous urban culture of northern Kyrgyzstan ceased to exist.

In 1825, Bishkek fortress was built by Koqand Khanate that made every effort to conquer northern Kyrgyzstan since the 1820s. The purpose of building such fortresses was both military and economical: to garrison Koqand troops and to control and secure the trade routes that passed through the territory of northern Kyrgyzstan to Russia. While Kyrgyz were nomads and lived in rural areas, Bishkek was mainly occupied by Sarts, the settled people of Central Asia that spoke Turkic languages and practiced farming and trade.

Bishkek fortress was destroyed by Russian troops when they came to colonize the region and undermine Koqand influence there. It was rebuilt as a Russian settlement after their annexation of northern Kyrgyzstan in 1868. Pishpek (distorted Bishkek), as it was called by Russians, became the center of Pishpek uezd, one of the districts in the newly established province of the Russian Empire — Turkestan Governorate-General.

The present-day city of Bishkek was established in 1878. It was the time when the Russian authorities granted Bishkek the status of a city and adopted the project of Bishkek urban development. According to the project, a small village had to be turned into a big city with broad streets and avenues, beautiful parks and squares.

With the establishment of the Soviet rule on the territory of Kyrgyzstan, the status of Bishkek city was promoted. As a result of the 1924 national-territorial delimitation of Central Asia, Bishkek became the political and administrative city of the newly created Kara-Kyrgyz

Autonomous Oblast. In 1926, Bishkek became the capital city of the Kyrgyz Autonomous Republic and was renamed Frunze after the famous commander of the Red Army *Mikhail Frunze* who was born there. In 1936, Bishkek became the capital of the Kyrgyz Soviet Socialist Republic, one of the fifteen union republics in the USSR.

In 1991, with the collapse of the Soviet Union, the city was returned its original name Bishkek. It became the capital of the newly created independent Kyrgyz Republic, though called the Republic of Kyrgyzstan prior to 1993.

Ethnicity in pre-Soviet period

During the Russian Empire, the population of Bishkek was represented mainly by Russians, Ukrainians, Sarts, Tatars, Dungans and some others.

Since Bishkek was built as the headquarters of Russian colonial authorities in Central Asia, the majority of its inhabitants were Russians. Most of Russians as well as Ukrainians appeared in Bishkek and other cities of northern Kyrgyzstan as a result of the immigration policy initiated by Tsarist authorities in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It was the policy of driving peasants from the internal provinces of Russia and Ukraine and resettling them on the territories of northern Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. According to Krongardt, the population of Russians and Ukrainians on the territory of Kyrgyzstan reached about 122,000 people by 1914 [Krongardt, 1997: 27].

At that time, very few Kyrgyz lived in Bishkek. The Kyrgyz, especially those in the northern part of Kyrgyzstan, led a nomadic life style and were engaged in cattle-breeding almost till the early 1930s when they were ultimately forced to settle by the Soviet regime. Therefore, the majority of Kyrgyz did not live in cities but occupied rural areas.

As for Tatars, most of them appeared in the region in the late 19th and early 20th centuries after the annexation of Central Asia by the Russian Empire. Tatars came to the region along with Russian troops as interpreters, religious figures, soldiers and officers. Tatars were Muslims who since the 16th century lived under the Russian suzerainty. They were dispatched to the region by Russian colonial authorities as the guides of Russian culture and influence. They taught Kyrgyz the basics of the Islamic religion and literacy, opened elementary schools for children, and served as the interpreters between the Russian administration and local people. Most of them came from Kazan, Ufa, Orenburg, and other cities and provinces of Russia and settled in the cities of Kyrgyzstan [Krongardt, 1997: 28].

In the second half of the 19th century, 14,000 Dungans migrated to the territory of Kyrgyzstan [Krongardt, 1997: 29]. The majority of Dungans were refugees who took part in the rebellion against Chinese authorities and escaped to Kyrgyzstan because of their suppression and persecution in China. The first group of Dungans migrated to Kyrgyzstan in 1877. In 1881–1883, the second group of Dungans arrived in Kyrgyzstan. The second group of Dungans settled in Pishpek uezd [Krongardt, 1997: 29].

Ethnicity under Soviet rule

When Bishkek became the political, economic and cultural center of the Kyrgyz Soviet Socialist Republic, its population and ethnic diversity grew dramatically.

The first Soviet census of 1926 recorded almost 36,000 people in Bishkek [Vsesoiuznaia perepis' naseleniia 1926 goda: Kirgizskaia ASSR]. Among them, Russians made up almost

70%, Uzbeks — 5.5%, Ukrainians — 5.5%, Kyrgyz — 4.6%, Tatars — 3.6%, Dungans — 3.3% and other ethnicities — 8% [Vsesoiuznaia perepis' naseleniia 1926 goda: Kirgizskaia ASSR].

Various processes and factors contributed to the formation of multiethnic society in Bishkek. Industrialization, Collectivization, Cultural Revolution, ethnic deportations during the Soviet period considerably changed the ethnic situation in the city.

The majority of Slavs appeared in Kyrgyzstan as a result of the policy of migration initiated and regulated by the central government. According to it, many workers, engineers, scientists and artists of Slavic origin were dispatched to Kyrgyzstan and Central Asia in order to work at the newly emerged factories and enterprises and to develop Kyrgyz and Central Asian science, education and art. Slavs mainly occupied the capital, Bishkek city, and other cities and villages in Chui and Issyk-Kul provinces of Kyrgyzstan.

As a result, the proportions of Russians and Ukrainians in Kyrgyzstan increased. In 1926, Russians and Ukrainians made up 11.7% and 6.4% in the population of the republic. Ten years later, in 1936, their proportions reached 20.8% and 9.4% correspondingly [Orusbaev, 1990: 29].

The increase in the proportion of non-Kyrgyz ethnicities in Kyrgyzstan was caused by the deportations of ethnic groups initiated by Stalin in the 1930s. The entire ethnic groups were forced to move from their original lands in Central Russia, Far East, Northern Caucasia, Baltic republics, Crimea and then resettled in Kyrgyzstan and other republics of Central Asia.

First Uighurs came to Kyrgyzstan in the 1920s. The second wave of Uighur migration took place in the 1950–60s with the establishment of the Communist regime and Cultural Revolution in China. Most of them settled in the cities of northern Kyrgyzstan such as Bishkek, Tokmok and Karakol.

Kazakh migration to Kyrgyzstan was caused by the 1933 famine in Kazakhstan. Most of Kazakhs settled in Chui and Talas provinces.

In 1937, the Kurds of Armenia and Azerbaijan were deported. The same year the Koreans of the Far East were forced to migrate. The Great Patriotic War became the ground for the deportations of Germans from the Volga region, the peoples of the newly incorporated territories of Bessarabia, Western Ukraine, Baltic republics as well as Ingush, Chechens, Balkars, Kalmyks, Turks-Meskhethians, Crimean Tatars. However, first Germans migrated to Kyrgyzstan earlier during the time of the Russian Empire.

Finally, the evacuation of prominent scholars and artists from the regions affected by the Great Patriotic War to Kyrgyzstan and Central Asia also greatly contributed to the formation of a multiethnic society in Bishkek and the rise in the proportion of non-Kyrgyz ethnicities in Kyrgyzstan.

Since the late 1950s, the new demographic trends emerged. On the one hand, Industrialization that intensified after the Great Patriotic War with the relocation of heavy industry and machinery of Russia in Kyrgyzstan resulted in the establishment of new plants and factories in the republic and the immigration of more Russians to Bishkek and other industrial cities.

On the other, the internal migration of Kyrgyz, mainly from rural areas towards urban centers of Kyrgyzstan promoted the increase in the Kyrgyz population of Bishkek. Historically, most of Kyrgyz lived in villages, where they were engaged in such activities as cattle-breeding and tobacco cultivation. The creation of new jobs at the newly opened enterprises and the desire of the young generation to study at high educational institutions and colleges

forced them to move to cities. According to the 1959 census, Kyrgyz formed 40.5% of the population in the republic, 13.3% among urban residents and 10.4% in Bishkek city [Naselenie Kyrgyzstana: itogi pervoi natsional'noi perepisi naseleniia Kyrgyzskoi Respubliki 1999 goda v tablitsakh, 2000: 81].

Since the 1970s, the rise in the proportion of Kyrgyz in Bishkek and Kyrgyzstan continued. In the 1970s it was due to the migration of Russians, Ukrainians, Tatars, Germans and others to the Baltic republics as well the newly so-called great construction projects of the Soviet Union in Siberia and the Far East. Since the majority of those non-indigenous ethnicities was urban residents, their emigration affected the ethnic composition of Bishkek and other cities.

The 1979 census of Kyrgyzstan marked the highest populations of Russians (25.9%), Ukrainians (3.1%), Germans (2.9%) and Tatars (2%) in the republic. Since that time their number began to decline [Osnovnye itogi pervoi natsional'noi perepisi naseleniia Kyrgyzskoi Respubliki 1999 goda, 2000: 26].

In the 1980s, the ethnic emigrations intensified. However, in the 1980s they directed the historical lands of those ethnicities. According to the data of the 1989 census, the number of Russians decreased to 21.5%, Ukrainians to 2.5%, Germans to 2.4% and Tatars to 1.6% (First National Population Census 1999 26). According to the data of the last Soviet census in 1989, the population of 620,000 people in Bishkek was represented by 56% of Russians, 23% of Kyrgyz, 5.5% of Ukrainians, 2.2% of Germans [Vtoraya natsional'naya perepis' naseleniia Kyrgyzstana 2009 goda] (See Table 1).

That is, the emigration of non-indigenous ethnic groups, on the one hand, and the internal migration of Kyrgyz, on the other, brought to the development of the new ethnic situation in Bishkek city where Kyrgyz became the ethnic majority.

Ethnicity after independence

With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the ethnic situation in Bishkek dramatically changed. Although it remained a multiethnic city, significant shifts in the populations of ethnic groups took place.

Bishkek ceased to be the city of Russians and Russians were not any more the numerical majority in Bishkek city. Although the population in the city in 1999 increased to 762,000 people, the proportion of Russians declined by more than 20%, from 56% in 1989 to 33% in 1999 [Vtoraia natsional'naia perepis' naseleniia Kyrgyzstana 2009 goda]. In 1999, the proportion of Kyrgyz reached 52% in Bishkek and for the first time in the history of the city they appeared to be the majority in the city [Vtoraya natsional'naya perepis' naseleniia Kyrgyzstana 2009 goda]. As for Russians, they turned to be the second largest ethnic group in Bishkek after Kyrgyz [Vtoraia natsional'naia perepis' naseleniia Kyrgyzstana 2009 goda] (See Table 1).

Two main factors contributed to the shift in the ethnic composition of Bishkek city after independence. The first factor is the ethnic emigration of Russians, Ukrainians, Germans, Tatars, Kazakhs, Koreans and other non-indigenous ethnic groups to their historical homelands. The second factor is the internal migration of Kyrgyz, Uighurs, Dungans, Turks and some others from provinces and rural areas of Kyrgyzstan to Bishkek as well as their high birth rate.

As a result of Kyrgyz internal migration to Bishkek city, 17 shanty districts with the total population of 95,000 people emerged around the capital by 1999 [Osnovnye itogi pervoi

natsional'noi perepisi naseleniia Kyrgyzskoi Respubliki 1999 goda, 2000: 84]. Those shanty districts occupied the same area that Bishkek alone occupied before. At the same time, they lack an infrastructure and services there. Most of residents are unemployed.

After independence, two national censuses were carried out in Kyrgyzstan in 1999 and 2009. Analyzing the data of three censuses, the last Soviet census of 1989 and two national censuses of 1999 and 2009, dramatic changes in the ethnic composition of Bishkek city can be observed (See Table 1). The proportion of Kyrgyz grew from 23% in 1989 to 52% in 1999 and 60% in 2009, while the percentage of Russians declined from 56% in 1989, 33% in 1999 and 24% in 2009 [Vtoraia natsional'naia perepis' naseleniia Kyrgyzstana 2009 goda].

In general, the population of Bishkek city can be divided into three groups.

The first group includes Kyrgyz whose number significantly increased between two national censuses of 1999 and 2009 as a result of their internal migration and high birth rate. Between 1999 and 2009, the population of Kyrgyz increased from almost 400,000 to 552,000 people, or by almost 8% from 52% to 60%. The majority of those Kyrgyz came to Bishkek from all provinces and villages of Kyrgyzstan where there didn't have enough jobs. In Bishkek, they were mainly employed in the markets of the city.

The second group represents those ethnicities whose populations sharply declined due to emigration. They are Russians, Tatars, Kazakhs, Ukrainians, Germans and others. In the period of 1999–2009, the population of Russians declined from 250,000 to 190,000 people, or by 10% from 33% to 23%. The number of Tatars dropped from about 16,000 to 13,000 people, or from 2% to 1.5%. The population of Kazakhs decreased from 12,000 to 9,000 people, or from 1.6% to 1%. The number of Ukrainians dropped from 16,000 to almost 8,000 people, or from 2% to less than 1%. And the population of Germans declined from 5,000 to 2,500 people, or from 0.7% to 0.3%. Most of them emigrated to their historical lands: Russia, Kazakhstan, Germany.

Ethnic composition of Bishkek city in 1989, 1999, 2009

	Population 1989	%	Population 1999	%	Population 2009	%
All	619903	100,00%	762308	100,00%	835743	100,00%
Kyrgyz	141841	22,88%	398000	52,21%	552957	60,16%
Russians	345387	55,72%	252831	33,17%	192080	23,78%
Uighurs	10977	1,77%	13143	1,72%	13380	6,80%
Tatars	16984	2,74%	15817	2,07%	12712	1,52%
Koreans	10043	1,62%	12710	1,67%	12014	1,44%
Uzbeks	10390	1,68%	12393	1,63%	11801	1,41%
Kazakhs	8943	1,44%	12064	1,58%	9013	1,08%
Ukrainians	34321	5,54%	16125	2,12%	7987	0,96%
Dungans	2618	0,42%	3558	0,47%	4040	0,48%
Turks	908	0,15%	2277	0,30%	3149	0,38%
Germans	13619	2,20%	5228	0,69%	2554	0,31%

Source: *Vtoraia natsional'naia perepis' naseleniia Kyrgyzstana 2009 goda*, <http://www.stat.kg>

The third group consists of those ethnic groups whose populations remained more or less stable during the period of 1999–2009. They are Uighurs, Koreans, Uzbeks, Dungans and Turks. The populations of Uighurs, Dungans and Turks slightly increased, while the populations of Koreans and Uzbeks slightly declined. The number of Uighurs increased from 13,143 to 13,380 people, or by 5% from 1.7% to 6.8%. That is, Uighurs became the third largest ethnic group in Bishkek. The population of Dungans increased from 3,558 to 4,040 people, or from 0.47% to 0.48%. The population of Turks increased from 2,277 to 3,149 people, or from 0.3% to 0.38%. At the same time, the number of Koreans and Uzbeks dropped from 12,710 to 12,014 people, or from 1.67% to 1.44%, and from 12,383 to 11,801 people, or from 1.63% to 1.41% respectively.

There is a number of particularities in the geographical distribution of ethnic groups in Bishkek city. Previously most of Russians, Ukrainians, and Slavs inhabited the center and the southern part of Bishkek city, while Kyrgyz, Uighurs, Uzbeks and others mainly occupied the north, east and suburbs. At present, new patterns emerged in the geographical distribution of ethnicities in Bishkek. The majority of Kyrgyz who arrived in Bishkek in the 1990s and later settled around Bishkek in so-called shanty districts.

Language and ethnicity

Language is not only the system of communication. There is another aspect of language that is not immediately self-evident. Language is a symbol of ethnic identity and ethnic groups. In this regard, communicative and symbolic functions should be distinguished within language. Presently, the censuses of many countries in the world have the question of language but not the question of ethnicity.

At the same time, many scholars refuse to regard language as an important part of ethnic identity, since there are ethnic groups that survived their ethnic languages but did not assimilate. That is, the decline of language does not always bring to the decline of ethnicity. When the communicative function of the language declines, the symbolic role of the language remains.

Learnt from childhood, language becomes an integral part of personality. The individual usually identifies with his language and has a strong sense of loyalty to it. Because of its powerful and visible symbolism skillful politicians use language as a banner to find mass support and gain political power. However, linguistic nationalists usually emphasize the communicative aspect of language when initiating their campaigns to revive and preserve their languages.

A skillful manipulation of languages can affect ethnic identity. The national-territorial delimitation of Turkestan in 1924 prevented the consolidation of Turkic speaking peoples in Central Asia on their common cultural and religious basis. Moreover, the language reforms of 1920–40s resulted in the disconnection of Islamic and Turkic traditions in Central Asia with the Middle East and the development of a new Soviet culture in the region.

Historically, the Turkic languages of Central Asia, including Kyrgyz, were written in the Arabic script. In 1924, a modified Arabic script was introduced for Kyrgyz. In 1927, the Kyrgyz language switched from Arabic to Latin. In 1941, the Cyrillic alphabet was adopted for Kyrgyz.

While the first reform was linguistically justified, the second reform undermined the influence of Islam in Central Asia. Although the adoption of Latin helped eliminating illiteracy in Central Asia during the second reform, the third reform cut Central Asia from the growing political and cultural influence of Turkey paving the way for further russification.

Language is the cement that keeps together the members of an ethnic group and the boundary that differentiates one ethnic group from another. The first contact with a different ethnicity takes place when the individual hears a different language. It is the time when he makes a distinction between “Us” and “Them”, between “Our” community and “Their”. To go beyond your ethnicity requires mastering a different language.

Language is a specific element of ethnic culture. The particularities of history, economy, politics, culture, geographical location, psychology and lifestyle are reflected in language. “Languages do not just symbolize its associated culture, and they are not just indexically better suited for its related culture than are any other languages”, “in huge areas of real life the language is the culture and neither law nor education nor religion nor government nor politics nor social organization would be possible without it” [Fishman, 1999: 444–5]. Particular languages are created by particular ethnic groups and the latter has the historical right to them.

Language of pre-Soviet and Soviet times

Established in 1878 by Russian authorities, Bishkek turned to be the city of Russians. The Russians represented the new regime and the new ruling elite in Central Asia. Russians were the numerical majority in the city unlike Kyrgyz and other locals who predominantly lived in traditional towns or villages of the region. The language spoken in Bishkek was Russian too. That is, in the pre-Soviet period, Russian was the language of administration and the language of Russian ethnic majority in the city.

When the Bolsheviks came to power and established the Soviet rule in Kyrgyzstan, they initiated a new language policy. The Bolsheviks refused to introduce the only official language in the state but promoted multilingualism. That policy was motivated by the attempts of Bolsheviks to go away from the policy of russification followed by the Russian Empire. However, in the late 1930s a radical shift took place and the course changed in favor of the Russian language again.

Although the Kyrgyz language was promoted in Kyrgyzstan at the earlier stage of the Soviet rule, the situation in Bishkek city was still very different. The population of Russians in the city continued to grow as a result of the Soviet policy of migrations. Russians represented an absolute majority in the city, while the proportion of Kyrgyz there was still very small.

With the shift towards the policy of russification in the Soviet Union in general and union republics in particular, the position of Russian in Bishkek became even stronger. Most of secondary schools and higher educational institutions switched to Russian as the language of instruction. All schools instructing in Kyrgyz were closed with the only exception for School #5 in Bishkek that remained to instruct its students in Kyrgyz. From 1959 to 1989, Kyrgyz was not taught in secondary schools of Kyrgyzstan. As a result, 42% of Kyrgyz pupils did not study Kyrgyz at schools and could speak Kyrgyz during informal communication only [Sovetskaia Kirgiziia, 1987].

The language continues to play its communicative role if the members of an ethnic group are geographically concentrated. If the members of an ethnic group are geographically dispersed, their language can lose its communicative role. All other ethnicities that migrated to Bishkek during the Soviet time were much fewer in their number compared to Russians, so that they had to adapt to the existing linguistic situation in the city and learn Russian to communicate with others and even between themselves. Russian became the language of

interethnic and intra-ethnic communication in both Bishkek city and Kyrgyzstan as well as the language of the official correspondence in state agencies, the language of science, education and mass media, though the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Soviet Socialist Republic formally declared Kyrgyz the official language in the republic.

At the same time, the language policy of the Soviets during the later stage did not diminish the importance of ethnic languages as the main markers of ethnic identity. For the absolute majority of the Soviet people, ethnic languages remained the symbol of their ethnic identity. According to the 1979 census, 93.1% of the population in Kyrgyzstan mentioned their mother tongues as the languages of their ethnicities [Naselenie SSSR, 1980: 23].

Language after independence

After the breakup of the Soviet Union and the declaration of independence by Kyrgyzstan, the language policy and language situation tremendously changed. The major shift concerned the new de jure and de facto status of Kyrgyz in the republic, especially in Bishkek city. Despite this, Russian retained its position as the language of interethnic communication, higher education and mass media in Bishkek city.

One of the first measures in the new language policy was the adoption of the 1989 law that declared Kyrgyz the only state language in Kyrgyzstan. The law pursued both political and linguistic goals. Politically, it aimed at the decentralization from Moscow and was part of the nation and state building in Kyrgyzstan. As for the linguistic goal, the new law aimed to promote the status of Kyrgyz and to fill in the gap emerged between the official use of Kyrgyz and Russian. Kyrgyz had to be introduced in all aspects of political and social life of the republic and gradually [Chotaeva, 2004: 93].

The new language policy also manifested itself in the change of geographical names of the cities, villages and streets. Original Kyrgyz names were returned to the objects, while Russian names were translated into Kyrgyz. For example, the original name *Karakol* was returned to *Przhevalsk*, while *Rybachye* was simply translated into Kyrgyz as *Balykchy*. The major streets and avenues in Bishkek city were also given Kyrgyz names. For example, *Sovetskaya* Street turned into *Baytik Baatyr* Street, *Belinskaya* Avenue became *Manas* Avenue, and *Dzerzhinskaya* Avenue became *Erkindik* Avenue.

Nevertheless, the course of de-russification initiated by post-Soviet Kyrgyz authorities could not immediately undermine the position of Russian in the country. Although Russians began to emigrate to their historical land and their number started to decline, they still formed the second largest ethnic group in Bishkek.

In 2000, the new language law recognized the importance of Russian and declared it the official language of Kyrgyzstan. Soon the amendments regarding the new status of Russian were introduced to the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic.

With the mass migration of Kyrgyz from other provinces and cities to Bishkek, the position of the Kyrgyz language in the city changed. If earlier the Kyrgyz language was predominantly the language of intra-ethnic and intra-family communication, in the post-Soviet period it turned to be the second widely spoken language in Bishkek.

That is, the emigration of Russians and other Russian speaking groups, on the one hand, and the internal migration of Kyrgyz to Bishkek, on the other, were the main factors that contributed to the shifts in the language situation of Bishkek city.

The new language course towards Kyrgyz was finally shaped in the 2004 law that again emphasized the status of Kyrgyz as the only state language of Kyrgyzstan. Moreover, the decree prescribed a gradual switch of the official paper work in state agencies to Kyrgyz. At the same time, the law was accompanied by the decree of the president that charged the Government to develop bilingualism in the country and set favorable conditions for both languages Kyrgyz and Russian [Chotaeva, 2004: 102–3].

In 2013, by the Decree of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic and the Resolution of the Parliament, *the Concept of Strengthening the Unity of the People and Interethnic Relations in the Kyrgyz Republic* was adopted. It became the very first state document that defined the strategy of the government in interethnic relations. The Concept aimed to build the civic nation in Kyrgyzstan on the basis of the Kyrgyz language [Kontseptsiya ukrepleniya edinstva naroda i mezhetnicheskikh otnosheniy v Kyrgyzskoy Respublike].

Ethnicity and language in 2003 and 2011 surveys

In 2003 and 2011, two surveys were conducted to study the interethnic situation in Kyrgyzstan¹⁶. Both of them were carried out in five regions of Kyrgyzstan: Chui, Issyk-Kul, Osh, Djalal-Abad provinces and Bishkek city. The main criterion how those regions were chosen was their more diverse ethnic composition compared to others.

1000 people aged 16 and higher were questioned (200 people in each of the above mentioned regions) by means of a questionnaire that contained 31–38 questions. Respondents were selected based on their ethnicity, so that the major ethnic groups of Kyrgyzstan could be represented in the surveys. The questions of the surveys included the questions of language, ethnicity, religion, interethnic relations, interethnic integration, etc.

Therefore, both surveys had similar samplings and questions, so that the findings of both can be compared to see the dynamics within 8 years between the surveys. This section will present and discuss the findings regarding the language situation in Bishkek city, the relation of language to ethnicity as well as the language preferences of Bishkek respondents.

Since ethnicity was the main criterion in the samplings of both surveys, the largest ethnic groups of Kyrgyzstan and Bishkek city such as Kyrgyz, Russian, and Uzbeks were represented correspondingly in the surveys.

In 2003, 53% of Kyrgyz, 35% of Russians, and 12% of other ethnicities took part in the survey from Bishkek city. As for the 2011 survey, there were 50.3% of Kyrgyz, 30.2% of Russians and almost 20% of other ethnicities from Bishkek.

In the question on mother tongue, 52% of respondents mentioned Kyrgyz, 37% mentioned Russian and 10% mentioned other languages in Bishkek city in the 2003 survey.

As for the 2011 survey, in the same question on mother tongue, 51% of respondents mentioned Kyrgyz, 31% mentioned Russian and almost 18% mentioned other languages of Bishkek city. Of course, among those respondents who mentioned Russian was not only ethnic Russians but other ethnicities too who considered Russian as their mother tongue.

At the same time, the surveys reconfirmed the statement that for the majority of respondents in Kyrgyzstan, language is an important marker of their ethnic identity and answering «yes»

¹⁶ 2003 and 2011 surveys were conducted by the author of the paper. The 2003 survey was funded by the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, while the 2011 survey was carried out within the framework of the UNESCO project.

to the question about their mother tongue, they wanted to emphasize their belonging to their ethnicity.

The data of the 2003 and 2011 surveys conducted by the author demonstrated that the majority of respondents prefer to speak their ethnic languages in their families. That is, ethnic languages are the most stable in families. However, the situation changes when it comes to the secondary and higher educational institutions where more people prefer to study in Russian.

According to the data of the 2003 survey, almost 52% of respondents were brought up in their families in Russian, 44% in Kyrgyz and the rest in other ethnic languages. In the 2011 survey, 52% of respondents were raised in Kyrgyz, 44% in Russian and the rest in others.

Although the language of instruction at schools is often determined by the language spoken in the family, the Soviet time was marked by the trend when parents preferred to place their children in Russian schools. It was explained by a higher status of Russian during that time, better quality of education in Russian schools and a wider range of employment opportunities after graduation. The same trend continued after independence, although the respondents were motivated by different factors.

According to the 2003 survey, 58% of respondents studied in Russian schools, almost 37% in Kyrgyz, and 3% in Uzbek. During the 2011 survey, or 8 years later, 59% studied in Russian, 41% in Kyrgyz and about 2% in Uzbek.

Of course, the respondents who studied in Russian schools were not only of Russian ethnicity but others too, including Kyrgyz. At the same time, the number of respondents who attended Kyrgyz schools increased in 2011 that can be explained by a gradual promotion of the Kyrgyz language, especially at the state level.

Although the status of Kyrgyz after independence was promoted according to the new language policy, Russian was still widely spoken in the city. In the higher and secondary special education, Russian remained the dominant language of instruction.

In the 2003 survey, 56% of respondents were taught in Russian and 10% in Kyrgyz. Of course, only 65% of respondents had higher, higher incomplete or secondary vocational education. In the 2011 survey, 74% of respondents were educated in Russian and 17% in Kyrgyz out of 82% of respondents with higher education, higher incomplete or secondary vocational education.

Quite similar situation is in the working places. By the data of the 2003 survey, almost 63% of respondents spoke Russian in their offices and 21% spoke Kyrgyz. In the 2001 survey, almost 62% spoke Russian and 35% spoke Kyrgyz. You may see that 8 years later more people turned to speak Kyrgyz in their working places. At the same time, the proportion of Kyrgyz speaking respondents doesn't significantly affect the preferences of those respondents speaking Russian in offices.

That is, in the organizations and companies that respondents worked for, the main language of communication is Russian. This could be explained by the traditions of the Soviet time when the language of the official correspondence in the state was Russian. At the same time, the new trend could be observed when the number of Kyrgyz speaking respondents is increasing too. This is the result of the language policy after independence when Kyrgyz was declared the state language in the country and the official correspondence in state agencies is also gradually switching to Kyrgyz.

Conclusion

Various factors contributed to the development of a multiethnic society in Bishkek city. Colonization, Industrialization, Collectivization, Cultural Revolution, ethnic deportations dramatically changed the ethnic situation in the city during the Soviets. However, the main factors of ethnic changes after independence were the emigration of Russians, Ukrainians, Tatars, Germans and other non-indigenous ethnic groups to their homelands and the internal migration of Kyrgyz from regions and rural areas to Bishkek city.

The language situation in Bishkek is closely related to the ethnic composition of the city. Language is not only the means of communication but an important marker of ethnic identity. During the Soviet time, Russian was the official language in the Soviet Union as well as the dominant language in Bishkek city. It was the language of interethnic and intra-ethnic communication in the city. However, after independence the language situation changed. The 2004 language law in Kyrgyzstan announced Kyrgyz the only state language in the country. According to it, the official correspondence in Kyrgyzstan was supposed switch to Kyrgyz.

Currently Russian remains the second language spoken in Bishkek. It retains its position as the language of higher education, science and interethnic communication. Good evidence is the findings of the 2003 and 2011 surveys when the majority of the respondents in Bishkek city indicated their ethnic languages as their mother tongues. They speak their ethnic languages in family and intra-ethnic communication but study in Russian in educational institutions and speak Russian in their working places.

Although the number of Russians and Russian speaking groups are steadily declining today, the position of Russian in Bishkek is still quite stable. Russian continues to play a significant role in the political, economic and social life of the city. It can be explained by the terminological and functional weakness of the Kyrgyz language, the presence of a significant proportion of ethnic minorities in Bishkek that is predominantly Russian speaking, and the recent labor migration of Kyrgyz people to Russia. Therefore, the orientation towards Russian among the people of Kyrgyzstan will remain in the future, though it could be harder for the younger generations to master it.

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РУССКО-КАЗАХСКИЕ ШКОЛЫ В СИСТЕМЕ ГОСУДАРСТВЕННОГО УПРАВЛЕНИЯ ОБРАЗОВАТЕЛЬНЫМ ПРОСТРАНСТВОМ СТЕПНОГО ГЕНЕРАЛ-ГУБЕРНАТОРСТВА НАЧАЛА XX В.¹⁷

Исследуется место русско-казахских школ в системе управления имперской администрацией Степным краем в начале XX в. Объясняется, каким образом русско-казахская школа (и как ее ответвление специально адаптированная к хозяйственно-бытовым условиям кочевого общества аульная школа) выполняла функцию аккультурации коренного населения. В ходе рассмотрения законодательного регулирования процесса обучения в «инородческих училищах» автор уделяет внимание пересечению интересов министерств, контролировавших образовательную политику в Акмолинской и Семипалатинской областях. Анализируя законодательную базу образовательной интеграции, процесс строительства русско-казахских школ, автор выявляет разновекторную направленность действий Министерства народного просвещения и Министерства внутренних дел: с одной стороны, включение Степного края в имперскую систему обра-

¹⁷ Работа выполнена в рамках госзадания Минобрнауки РФ «Развитие этнорелигиозной ситуации в трансграничном пространстве Алтая, Казахстана и Монголии в контексте государственно-конфессиональной политики: исторический опыт и современные тенденции» (проект № 33.2177.2017/4.6).